

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Original) A composite material comprising a plurality of cores of ultra-hard material, or the components for making an ultra-hard material, dispersed in a matrix, the matrix comprising the components for making an ultra-hard material of a grade different to that of the cores, and a suitable binder.
2. (Original) A composite material according to claim 1, wherein the ultra-hard material is polycrystalline diamond (PCD) or polycrystalline cubic boron nitride (PcBN).
3. (Original) A composite material according to claim 2, wherein the cores are provided as individual particles or in the form of granules.
4. (Currently Amended) A composite material according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, wherein the cores are made from a fine-grained PCD grade material and the matrix of a coarser PCD grade material than that of the cores.
5. (Currently Amended) A composite material according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the cores are made from a coarser PCD grade material and the matrix of a fine-grained PCD grade material.
6. (Currently Amended) A composite material according to claim 4 ~~or claim 5~~, wherein the fine-grained PCD grade material has grains having a grain size in the range of about 0.1 to about 20 microns.

7. (Currently Amended) A composite material according to ~~any one of claims 4 to 6~~ claim 4, wherein the coarser PCD grade material has grains having a grain size in the range of about 10 to about 100 microns.

8. (Currently Amended) A composite material according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein the cores and matrix are made from the same type of ultrahard material, and the particle size of the cores differs from that of the matrix by between about 5 and about 70 microns.

9. (Currently Amended) A composite material according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the cores and the matrix are made from the same ultrahard material, but with different binder phases.

10. (Currently Amended) A composite material according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the cores are formed of PCD and the matrix of PcBN type material.

11. (Currently Amended) A composite material according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the cores are formed from PcBN type material.

12. (Currently Amended) A composite material according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the cores and matrix are made from mixtures of two types of ultrahard materials, those mixtures being substantially different from each other.

13. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a composite material as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1, which includes the steps of:

(i) providing a plurality of cores of an ultra-hard material or the components for making an ultra-hard material;

(ii) providing the components for making an ultra-hard material of a different grade to that of the cores and a suitable binder; and

(iii) consolidating the cores, components and binder to produce a composite material.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a tool component including the steps of:

(i) providing a substrate;

(ii) providing a composite material as defined in ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~ claim

1;

(iii) placing a layer of the composite material on a surface of the substrate to produce an unbonded component; and

(iv) subjecting the unbonded component to conditions of elevated temperature and pressure suitable to produce an ultra-hard material.

15. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 13 ~~or claim 14~~, wherein the cores are provided as granules coated with the components for making an ultra-hard material and the binder.

16. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 13 ~~or claim 14~~, wherein the cores are provided as granules, and the granules are mixed with the components for making an ultra-hard material and the binder.

17. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein the cores are provided as granules coated with the components for making an ultra-hard material and the binder.

18. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein the cores are provided as granules, and the granules are mixed with the components for making an ultra-hard material and the binder.

19. (New) A composite material according to claim 5, wherein the fine-grained PCD grade material has grains having a grain size in the range of about 0.1 to about 20 microns.

20. (New) A composite material according to claim 5, wherein the coarser PCD grade material has grains having a grain size in the range of about 10 to about 100 microns.